

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY KABUL NIACT IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PK, US

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE: ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN

REF: KABUL 3048

1. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR THE SECRETARY'S
PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 22:

QUOTE. Q. THE WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THIS MORNING A U.S.-
PAKISTANI ARMS DEAL OF ABOUT DOLS 100 MILLION. IS THIS
ACCURATE?

A. SINCE WE LIFTED THE EMBARGO ON ARMS SALES TO INDIA AND
PAKISTAN OVER A YEAR AGO WE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSING POSSIBLE
SALES TO PAKISTAN OF A NUMBER OF TYPES OF EQUIPMENT. WE
EXPECT TO MAKE SOME SPECIFIC SALES IN THE NEAR FUTURE WHICH
MAY INCLUDE TOW ANTI-TANK MISSILES, SOME AMMUNITION, TRAIN-
ING AIRCRAFT AND TRANSPORT HELICOPTERS. THESE WILL BE QUITE
MODEST TRANSACTIONS AND IN LINE WITH OUR DESIRE TO ESTABLISH
A ROUTINE AND NORMAL MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKI-
STAN WHICH WILL NOT STIMULATE A NEW ARMS RACE IN SOUTH ASIA
OR IN ANY WAY UPSET THE VERY HOPEFUL PROCESS OF POLITICAL
NORMALIZATION BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN. WE ARE KEEPING
CONGRESS INFORMED.

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IF PRESSED: I WOULD NOT WANT TO COMMENT ON SPECIFIC

AMOUNTS, BUT OUR POSSIBLE NEW SALES TO PAKISTAN COMBINED WITH ROUTINE SALES OF ITEMS SUCH AS SPARE PARTS COULD ADD UP TO CLOSE TO DOLS 100 MILLION THIS FISCAL YEAR. I MIGHT ADD THAT GIVEN PRESENT PRICES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT, THIS IS NOT AN EXCEPTIONALLY LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY.

IF ASKED: A PAKISTAN AIR FORCE TEAM HAS JUST COMPLETED A VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY AT THE INVITATION OF A NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL CONTRACTORS. THE FACT THAT THEY LOOKED AT SEVERAL U.S. AIRCRAFT DOES NOT IMPLY ANY DECISION ON THE PART OF THE USG REGARDING ANY SPECIFIC SALES. WE DO NOT HAVE A FORMAL REQUEST FOR COMBAT AIRCRAFT FROM THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT. UNQUOTE.

2. ISSUE DID NOT ARISE, BUT POSTS MAY DRAW ON GUIDANCE IN RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS. NEW YORK-BASED SAMACHAR (EX-PRESS TRUST OF INDIA) CORRESPONDENT CHAKRAPANI WAS BRIEFED BY PECK (NEA/PAB) ALONG LINES OF GUIDANCE APRIL 22. PECK CORRECTED CHAKRAPANI'S IMPRESSION THAT AN ARMS PACKAGE WAS UNDER PREPARATION FOR PAKISTAN, SAYING THAT THE POST HEADLINE REFERRING TO AN ARMS "DEAL" WAS MISLEADING AND NOT BORNE OUT BY TEXT OF THE ARTICLE. THE USG IS ESTABLISHING A ROUTINE RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN UNDER WHICH INDIVIDUAL TRANSACTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE FROM TIME-TO-TIME WITHOUT NEED TO WORK OUT ANY OVERALL PACKAGE OR SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS. ASKED WHEN EQUIPMENT WOULD ACTUALLY START BEING DELIVERED TO PAKISTAN, PECK SAID THAT LEAD TIMES ON MOST FMS CASES WAS ONE TO FOUR YEARS, BUT THAT SOME EQUIPMENT AND MATERIEL PERMITTED UNDER PREVIOUS POLICY HAD BEEN DELIVERED TO PAKISTAN--AND TO INDIA AS WELL--OVER THE PAST YEAR OR TWO AND THAT THIS WOULD CONTINUE. SISCO

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